



State of Arizona
Department of Education

Tom Horne
Superintendent of
Public Instruction

CN# 10-06

MEMORANDUM

To: School Health & Nutrition Program Sponsors

From: Mary Szafranski, Deputy Associate Superintendent
Arizona Department of Education, Health & Nutrition Services

Holly Mueller, Program Director
Arizona Department of Education, School Health & Nutrition Programs

Date: October 7, 2005

RE: HealthierUS Schools—Take the Challenge!

The HealthierUS initiative is based on the premise that increasing personal fitness and having a healthier diet is critical to achieving a longer and higher quality of life. With obesity as a growing concern for school children in the United States many schools have already made changes to their school nutrition environments, improved the quality of the foods served, and now provide students with more nutritious choices. If you feel that your school(s) has made these changes the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) encourage you to *Take the Challenge!* The HealthierUS Schools Challenge was developed by USDA to encourage schools to go further and to recognize those who chose to do so.

Be prepared to take the challenge by following these 6 steps:

- Review the criteria, instructions and other resources to assist you in completing your application
- Download the application packet
- Convene a review panel
- Complete the review
- Obtain the required approvals and signatures
- Submit the completed application to **ADE**

FNS has developed an application packet and instructions that detail the criteria that must be met. The application requests specific information to verify a school's adherence to the criteria. The school's completed application packet must be evaluated by a local review panel and endorsed by the school's leadership, including its principal. The school's application packet should then be sent to ADE. **ADE will evaluate and forward the application packet to the USDA FNS Regional Office.**

Certified *Silver* or *Gold* schools will receive a Recognition of Achievement Plaque and will be recognized on the USDA's Team Nutrition website. Certified schools may also be selected for special USDA FNS media events. Additionally, schools may be eligible to receive other awards that promote and support the principles of the HealthierUS School Challenge. Certification as a HealthierUS School is for 2 years, the year of approval and the subsequent year.

For more information about the HealthierUS School Challenge and to obtain a copy of the Application visit: www.fns.usda.gov/tn/HealthierUS/index.html.

If you have questions or concerns regarding this memo, please contact your assigned School Health & Nutrition Program Specialist at 602-542-8700.